

Bill Hughes
33 Deborah Drive
Roswell, New Mexico 88201-6501

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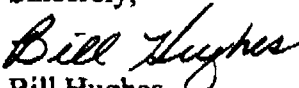
Attorney General John Ashcroft
US Department of Justice, 950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20530-0011

Dear Mr. Ashcroft:

I am of the opinion that the settlement that was reached between the Justice Department and the Microsoft Corporation is fair and reasonable, and I am in full support of it. It is nice to see that the lawsuit that has leveled the stock market and pushed our economy into recession is over, and I hope that the other states still involved in litigation will follow the lead of the federal government.

The settlement does not go easy on Microsoft, but will be beneficial to the entire information technology industry and the economy. Microsoft has agreed to design future versions of Windows, which will include a mechanism that will make it easier for computer makers and consumers to install and use non-Microsoft software within the Windows operating system. It will also make it easier to add or remove access features that are built into Windows. This will push the competition to develop better software that will rival Microsoft's, and gives the consumer more choices. This gives the consumer the best of all worlds. Competition in the information technology industry will benefit as will consumer choice. This settlement is good for everyone involved, and I stand behind it.

Sincerely,


Bill Hughes